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Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Chapter I

Introduction

1. At the 1st plenary meeting of its twenty-second special session, on 27 September 1999, the General Assembly established an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole and elected John William Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) Chairman, by acclamation.

2. The Committee held two meetings, on 27 and 28 September 1999, to hear representatives of United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and to consider the item allocated to it, namely agenda item 8, entitled "Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".

3. In connection with its consideration of agenda item 8, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as preparatory body for the special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;[1]

(b) Letter dated 24 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/S-22/6).

4. At its 1st meeting, on 27 September, the Committee heard a statement by the Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the Liaison Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations made a statement.

6. At its 2nd meeting, on 28 September, the Ad Hoc Committee heard statements by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Chief of the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Representative for the Caribbean of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

7. At the same meeting, the representative of the World Meteorological Organization made a statement.

8. Also at the same meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole elected Navid Hanif (Pakistan) Rapporteur, by acclamation.

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Special Session, Supplement No. 2 and addendum* (A/S-22/2 and Add.1).

Chapter II
Action taken by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

A. Draft declaration and state of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

9. At its 1st meeting, the Committee considered the text entitled "State of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".[2]

10. At the same meeting, the Chairman orally revised the text by replacing paragraphs 15 (l), (l) *bis* (alternative 1), (l) *bis* (alternative 2) and (l) *ter* with the following:

"(l) Recalling the provisions of paragraph 24 C (iii) of the Programme of Action, and reaffirming that the implementation of that paragraph shall be consistent with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant existing international legal instruments, in particular those mentioned in paragraph 67 of the Programme of Action;

"(m) Taking into account the views and concerns of small island developing States that the transboundary movement of hazardous and radioactive wastes is not adequately covered in the existing international legal regimes, in particular safety measures, disclosure, liability and compensation in relation to accidents, and remedial measures in relation to contamination from such wastes, calling on States and relevant international organizations to continue to address these concerns in a specific and comprehensive manner, and calling on the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly no later than at its fifty-sixth session on the efforts and measures undertaken and progress achieved;

"(n) Continuing efforts to implement the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal."

11. At the 1st meeting, the Committee adopted the text, as orally revised.

12. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Finland (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union) and the Marshall Islands.

13. At the same meeting, the Committee considered the text of the draft declaration.[2]

14. At the same meeting, the text of the fifth preambular paragraph was orally corrected by inserting the word "economically" before the word "vulnerable".

15. At the same meeting, the Chairman orally revised operative paragraph 9 by removing all square brackets and by inserting the words "acting as the preparatory body for the twenty-second special session" after the words "Commission on Sustainable Development".

16. At the same meeting, the Committee of the Whole adopted the text of the draft declaration, as orally revised.

17. At the same meeting, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole decided to recommend to the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session the adoption of the two draft texts, as orally revised (see para. 22 below, draft resolution).

[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 2A* (A/S-22/2/Add.1).

B. Letter dated 24 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

18. At its 1st meeting, on 27 September 1999, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole had before it a letter dated 24 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the annex thereto (A/S-22/6).

19. At the same meeting, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session that it take note of the letter and its annex, and transmit them to the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session for further consideration (see para. 23 below, draft decision).

20. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Barbados, Canada, Cuba, Finland (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), Guyana (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), Haiti, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Saint Lucia and the United States of America.

C. Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

21. At its 2nd meeting, on 28 September, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole adopted its draft report, as contained in document A/S-22/AC.1/L.1 and introduced by the Rapporteur.

Chapter III

Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

22. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Declaration and state of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Adopts the Declaration and state of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States contained in the annex to the present resolution.

Annex

Declaration and state of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Declaration

We, the States participating in the special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Having met at United Nations Headquarters on 27 and 28 September 1999,

Reaffirming the principles of and commitments to sustainable development embodied in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[a] Agenda 21,[b] the Declaration of Barbados[c] and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[d]

Recalling resolution S/19-2 of 28 June 1997, adopted by of the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, as well as the decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth,[e] sixth[f] and seventh sessions,[g]

Recognizing that small island developing States share a common aspiration for economic development and improved living standards and remain strongly committed to conserving the natural and cultural heritage upon which their future depends, and considering that the review of the further implementation of the Programme of Action aims to build on agreements already reached by the small island developing States and the international community concerning sustainable development, and that it provides a measure of progress towards sustainable development among those States and their regions and identifies where special attention is required to advance further the implementation of sustainable development,

Recalling that small island developing States are recognized as a special case for both environment and development because they are ecologically fragile and economically vulnerable, they face particular constraints in their efforts to achieve sustainable development and their specific physical circumstances often make it difficult for them to benefit from global economic development and thus achieve sustainable development,

Reaffirming that the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[h] translates Agenda 21 into specific policies, actions and measures

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[a] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

[b] Ibid., annex II.

[c] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publications, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[d] Ibid., annex II.

[e] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8* (E/1996/28).

[f] Ibid., *1998, Supplement No. 9* (E/1998/29).

[g] Ibid., *1999, Supplement No. 9* (E/1999/29).

[h] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda).

to be taken at the international, national and regional levels to enable small island developing States to address those constraints and achieve sustainable development,

Recognizing that communities of small island developing States are custodians of large areas of the world's oceans and have a high share of global biodiversity, that they are at the forefront in the fight against climate change and that their exposure and predicament underline the urgent need to take action to implement the Programme of Action,

Recognizing also that solutions found in this regard may provide examples beneficial to other countries around the world,

Recognizing further that considerable efforts have been made at all levels to implement the Programme of Action, and that there is a need for these efforts to be further supplemented by effective support from the international community, including financial support, by institutional strengthening and improved coordination, by targeted capacity-building and by facilitating the transfer of environmentally sound technologies in accordance with paragraph 34.14 (*b*) of Agenda 21,

Having considered progress reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action and the views expressed by delegations at the special session,

Convinced that the implementation of the Programme of Action must be accelerated by progress in the cross-cutting and interlinked areas of capacity-building, financing and technology transfer, and that institutional arrangements should be strengthened for its successful implementation,

1. *Welcome* the efforts by small island developing States to implement the commitments of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the support of the international community, and notes that these efforts have been affected by financial and other resource constraints and by global economic and environmental factors;

2. *Welcome also* the continued efforts of small island developing States to formulate national sustainable development strategies;

3. *Encourage* the efforts of all parties to foster an enabling environment to assist small island developing States in addressing overarching issues so as to achieve sustainable development;

4. *Call on* the international community to provide effective means, including adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, in accordance with chapter 33 of Agenda 21 and paragraphs 91 to 95 of the Programme of Action, to support efforts to achieve the full implementation of the Programme of Action, particularly in tackling complex issues, such as poverty, as highlighted in paragraph 6 of the review document;[i]

5. *Also call on* the international community to provide support for capacity- and institutional-building programmes and projects in small island developing States and, where appropriate, to support the establishment of training centres and other relevant capacity-building efforts;

6. *Call for* increased efforts to assist small island developing States as set forth in the Programme of Action, in obtaining the transfer of environmentally sound technology needed for them, to achieve sustainable development and implement the Programme of Action;

[i] See text below entitled "State of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".

7. *Call on* the Secretary-General to improve the existing institutional arrangements in the United Nations effectively to support small island developing States so that the United Nations system will become more proactive in promoting and assisting sustainable development in those States;

8. *Welcome* the continued efforts of the Alliance of Small Island States in promoting the interests and concerns of small island developing States, including in the implementation of the Programme of Action;

9. *Endorse* the series of broad initiatives for the further implementation of the Programme of Action as outlined in the recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory body for the twenty-second special session, as set forth below.

State of progress and initiatives for the future implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

I. Introduction

1. Since its adoption in 1994 at the Global Conference for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States all chapters of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which contain an integrated and comprehensive basis for the sustainable development of small island developing States, have been reviewed by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth session, in 1996, and at its sixth session, in 1998. At its seventh session, in 1999, the Commission, in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action, further reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action and identified the following areas for priority action, including the means for their implementation: climate change, including climate variability and sea level rise; natural disasters; freshwater resources; coastal and marine resources; energy; and tourism. The Commission recognized that the sectoral focus of its review should not detract from the need for a full and comprehensive implementation of all chapters of the Programme of Action. The Commission emphasized that the Programme of Action remained a valuable and living framework for the sustainable development efforts being undertaken by small island developing States, and noted the actions taken by Governments, regional commissions and organizations, organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in support of activities relating to its implementation. The special session of the General Assembly reaffirms the commitment of the international community to the continued implementation of the Programme of Action.

2. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its seventh session, also took note of the results of the meeting of representatives of donors and small island developing States, 24 to 26 February 1999, which, *inter alia*, considered a compendium of national and regional project proposals. The meeting underscored the strong sense of commitment to and ownership of the Programme of Action by small island developing States, and was welcomed as contributing towards strengthening and enriching the partnership between small island developing States and the international community. It also noted that, in accordance with their responsibility, considerable efforts had been made by small island developing States at the national and regional levels to meet the priorities and objectives of the Programme of Action, especially the elaboration of national sustainable development strategies. Consistent with their special concerns, and bearing in mind that small island developing States are custodians of a significant portion of the world's oceans and seas and their

resources, small island developing States have been actively and constructively engaged in international negotiations in pursuing integrated approaches in such areas as climate change, biodiversity, law of the sea, sustainable fisheries and marine pollution, and have undertaken efforts to meet their commitments under related international agreements.

3. At the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, the international community reiterated its recognition of the specific constraints faced by small island developing States and the need for particular support in their efforts to advance sustainable development owing to their small size and remoteness, ecological fragility, vulnerability to climate change and economic vulnerabilities. Small island developing States share many concerns and constraints with regard to sustainable development, and are affected by them in varying degrees. The specificity of the situation and needs of small island developing States in relation to sustainable development were acknowledged in Agenda 21 and further articulated in the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Constraints to the sustainable development of small island developing States include a narrow resource base, which does not allow small island developing States to benefit from economies of scale; small domestic markets and heavy dependence on a few external and remote markets; high costs for energy, infrastructure, transportation, communication and servicing; long distances from export markets and import sources; low and irregular international traffic volumes; little resilience to natural disasters; rising populations; high volatility of economic growth; limited opportunities for the private sector and a proportionately large reliance of their economies on the public sector; and fragile natural environments.

4. At its seventh session, the Commission on Sustainable Development also noted that since the holding of the Global Conference in 1994, the pace of globalization and trade liberalization had affected the economies of small island developing States by presenting new problems and opportunities for them and increasing the need for focused implementation of the Programme of Action. As a result of globalization, national policy frameworks and external factors, including trade impacts, have become critical in determining the success or failure of small island developing States in their national efforts. These States are particularly concerned that the specific problems and vulnerabilities confronting them exacerbate the difficulties encountered in their efforts to integrate into the world economy, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, commodities and capital markets. In order to address these challenges small island developing States are undertaking domestic reforms in the area of macroeconomic policy to facilitate integration into the global economy. At the regional level, they have also begun to put in place appropriate policy frameworks and arrangements to integrate their economic, social and environmental approaches to sustainable development in order to maximize opportunities available to them and minimize the constraints they face. A mutually supportive balance between the international and national environment is needed so as to achieve sustainable development.

5. The General Assembly recognizes that while it is up to small island developing States to pursue sustainable development and all partners should foster an enabling environment, the international community is committed to taking further measures to support those States in this regard. The Commission on Sustainable Development recognized that the further successful implementation of the Programme of Action would require action by all partners in the following areas: fostering of an enabling environment for investment and external assistance; resource mobilization and financing; transfer of environmentally sound technologies as set forth in the Programme of Action; and capacity-building, including education, training, awareness-raising and institutional development. The Commission assessed the progress made since the Global Conference by the international community in responding to the financial provisions of the Programme of Action, including through

mobilization of resources, initiation of discussions on financing for development, work on a vulnerability index, donor coordination, strengthened and expanded partnerships, mainstreaming sustainable development activities and working to assure better results from institutions to efforts of small island developing States and the sustainable development of those States, especially through capacity-building. The Commission reiterated the need for more focused action at all levels, including the international level, to strengthen support, including financial support from all sources, to small island developing States for programmes and projects targeted towards capacity-building and institutional building, facilitating the access of those States to and transfer and use of environmentally sound technology, as set forth in the Programme of Action. In order to facilitate targeted action in these areas, there is a need for Governments of small island developing States to develop or strengthen an effective policy framework along with national and regional sustainable development strategies or plans of action.

6. Poverty remains a major problem affecting the capacity of many small island developing States to achieve sustainable development. The complexity, pervasiveness and persistence of poverty has compromised the ability of States to provide basic social services, including basic education, health care, nutrition, clean water and sanitation, and to undertake effective land and coastal area management and urban planning and development. Poverty in small island developing States has been exacerbated by increasing levels of unemployment; both will have to be addressed in tandem in order to deal effectively with the crippling effect of poverty on sustainable development capacity. Eradication of poverty is therefore a serious issue and an objective of high priority for small island developing States, and requires the integration of economic, environmental and social components of action to achieve sustainable development.

7. At its seventh session, the Commission on Sustainable Development concluded that, among other things, the full, effective, and long-term implementation of the Programme of Action required a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community. The Commission encouraged the continuation and strengthening of partnership between small island developing States and their private sector. It also encouraged the private sector of other countries to develop partnership with small island developing States further.

II. Sectoral areas requiring urgent action

A. Climate change

8. Small island developing States are among those States most at risk from the adverse effects of climate change. The capacities and means to adapt to this phenomenon are an absolute necessity for them. The involvement and committed support of the international community are critical complements to small island developing States' own efforts in any response and long-term planning by those States. International support is particularly required for identifying adaptation options and linking efforts to reduce vulnerability with the best available information.

9. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Improvement of the capacity of small island developing States to respond adequately and adapt to climate change and to participate in and make the necessary linkages to other international activities, such as the study of climate variability;

(*b*) Improvement of work on capabilities for climate prediction;

(*c*) Closer collaboration of the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change so that information can be readily incorporated into the overall planning for long-term adaptation.

B. Natural and environmental disasters and climate variability

10. Small island developing States are prone to extremely damaging natural disasters, primarily in the form of cyclones, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, and are subject to effects of climate variability. In some islands, the range of these disasters and phenomena include storm surges, landslides, extended droughts and extensive floods. During 1997-1998, the El Niño phenomenon had its strongest impact on record on the sustainable development of many small island developing States.

11. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Greater effort to improve the scientific understanding of severe weather events, such as those associated with the El Niño/Southern Oscillation phenomenon, and the development of long-term strategies for prediction and reduction of their impacts;

(*b*) Improvement of work on capabilities for natural disaster reduction and early warning systems, including in-depth assessment and consideration of effective means of natural disaster reduction;

(*c*) Development of partnerships between small island developing States and the private sector consistent with responsible business practices to implement schemes that spread out risks, reduce insurance premiums, expand insurance coverage and thereby increase financing for post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation.

C. Freshwater resources

12. The issue of freshwater availability is crucial for small island developing States in all regions. Surface water and groundwater resources are limited by the small watershed and aquifer-recharge areas, and urban expansion has further affected the availability and quality of water resources. The geophysical characteristics of many small islands leave them vulnerable to extreme climatological, seismic and volcanic events, and more critically, to periods of drought, low recharge and adverse environmental impacts, including pollution, saline intrusion and soil erosion, among others, and they require increased attention to watershed management and land and water use planning.

13. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through

specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Implementation of Commission on Sustainable Development decision 6/1, relating to its programme of work on freshwater issues in the special context of small island developing States;[j]

(*b*) Improvement of assessment, planning and integrated management of freshwater resources in the special context of small island developing States;

(*c*) Coordination and refocusing of aid and other programmes and projects designed to assist small island developing States, as and where appropriate, in developing or implementing national policies, strategies and legal frameworks, as well as coherent plans and actions, within an integrated water resources management approach.

D. Coastal and marine resources

14. The health, protection and preservation of coastal and marine resources are fundamental to the well-being and sustainable development of small island developing States. Improved coastal and ocean management as well as conservation of the coasts, oceans and seas and the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources and arrangements and initiatives, including efforts aimed at reducing land and sea-based pollution, are critical both in support of regional fisheries organizations and in maintaining the oceans as a source of food and a principal factor in tourism development.

15. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Establishment and/or strengthening of programmes to build capacity, assess and manage the vast oceanic resources of small island developing States, and establish and/or strengthen specific regional or subregional arrangements for addressing issues concerning oceans and small island developing States issues;

(*b*) Establishment and/or strengthening of programmes within the framework of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities[k] and the regional seas programme, to assess the impact of planning and development on the coastal environment, including coastal communities, wetlands, coral reef habitats and the areas under the sovereignty or national jurisdiction of small island developing States and to implement the Programme of Action;

(*c*) Strengthening of national capacity for the development of a methodology or guidelines for sound practices and techniques suitable for small island developing States, for achieving the integrated management and sustainable development of the coastal and marine areas under the sovereignty or national jurisdiction of small island developing States, building on existing experience in that area;

(*d*) Scientific research and analysis relevant to the conservation and management of highly migratory and straddling fish stocks on the high seas and in the marine areas under the sovereignty or national jurisdiction of small island developing States;

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[j] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 9* (E/1998/29), chap. I.B.

[k] See UNEP (OCA)/LBA/IG.2/7.

(*e*) Enhancement of the conservation and sustainable management and utilization of coastal zone ecosystems and resources of the marine areas under the sovereignty or national jurisdiction of small island developing States;

(*f*) Ratification of or accession by States to the 1995 United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks,[l] and the 1993 Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and active participation by small island developing States in emerging and existing regional fisheries management organizations in order for these agreements to be fully implemented;

(*g*) Formulation of policies, strategies and measures to address fisheries needs, including the urgent need to address illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in the marine areas under the sovereignty or national jurisdiction of small island developing States, to ensure essential sources of food supplies for island populations and economic development;

(*h*) Strengthening of national, regional and subregional capacity for negotiating fishing agreements;

(*i*) Strengthening of national, regional and subregional capacity for the promotion, assessment and monitoring of commercial investment in sustainable fisheries, including catching, processing and marketing, as well as, where appropriate, in environmentally sound methods of aquaculture to increase ownership and management capacities of commercial fisheries activities by small island developing States communities and in national activities in the context of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and keeping in mind the recent International Guidelines/Plan of Action on Management of Fishing Capacity of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

(*j*) Greater regional coordination in management and monitoring, control and surveillance, including vessel monitoring systems and enforcement, consistent with international agreements of coastal countries and fishing countries in the marine areas under the sovereignty or national jurisdiction of small island developing States, including the management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks;

(*k*) Assistance to small island developing States in assessing the impact of land-based sources of marine pollution, in developing mechanisms to eliminate or minimize pollution sources and in participating in the implementation of the Programme of Action;

(*l*) Recalling the provisions of paragraph 24 C (iii) of the Programme of Action, and reaffirming that the implementation of that paragraph shall be consistent with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea[m] and other relevant existing international legal instruments, in particular those mentioned in paragraph 67 of the Programme of Action;

(*m*) Taking into account the views and concerns of small island developing States that the transboundary movement of hazardous and radioactive wastes is not adequately covered in the existing international legal regimes, in particular safety measures, disclosure, liability and compensation in relation to accidents, and remedial measures in relation to contamination from such wastes, calling on States and relevant international organizations to continue to address these concerns in a specific and comprehensive manner, and calling

[l] See A/50/550, annex I.

[m] *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

on the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly no later than at its fifty-sixth session on the efforts and measures undertaken and progress achieved;

(*n*) Continuing efforts to implement the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

16. Action is needed to sustain healthy reefs. Such action will build on the International Coral Reef Initiative[n] and global reef assessments to ensure food security and fish stock replenishment, and will provide a focus for implementation of the Jakarta Mandate on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity,[o] including marine protected areas and the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.[k]

17. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Encouragement of national and regional community-based reef conservation and management;

(*b*) Initiatives related to alternative livelihoods, such as aquaculture and ecotourism;

(*c*) Post-harvest technology and management initiatives;

(*d*) Integrated reef management initiatives;

(*e*) Research, monitoring and transfer of technology as set forth in the Programme of Action to assess the impact of exploration of non-living resources on the coastal and marine environments;

(*f*) Further implementation of coral reef action plans as part of the International Coral Reef Initiative and its "call to action", "renewed call to action" and "framework for action".

E. Energy

18. Taking into account the dependency of small island developing States on conventional energy sources, there is a need for mobilization of resources from all sources, including from the private sector, for the provision of technical, financial and technological assistance, as appropriate, to small island developing States, to encourage energy efficiency and to accelerate and maximize the development and utilization of environmentally sound renewable energy sources.

19. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives, and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

[n] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), chap. IV, paras. 103-105.

[o] See A/51/312, annex II, decision II/10.

(*a*) Establishing of renewable energy initiatives at the regional level so as to avoid duplication of efforts and to achieve economies of scale;

(*b*) Developing of human resources for the planning and sustainable management needs of a renewable energy sector;

(*c*) Promoting research and development and private sector investment in priority renewable energy projects;

(*d*) Financing renewable energy applications, including standards and guidelines for energy efficiency and conservation;

(*e*) Implementing in small island developing States the best practices to achieve clean, sustainable energy resources and encouraging private sector involvement in the utilization of renewable energy resources and innovative financing schemes with a view to longer-term self-sufficiency in energy resources.

F. Tourism

20. The development and promotion of sustainable tourism will require efforts undertaken by small island developing States at the national and regional levels. In this regard, there is a need for continued international support and cooperation. Particular attention will be required to coordinate ecotourism ventures at the regional level, and to facilitate the sharing of information and experiences and the integration of the private sector within official development assistance supported ecotourism projects. Specific actions have been identified in the report of the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Tourism Organization on sustainable tourism development for small island developing States.[p] In this regard, the special session took note of decision 7/3 on tourism and sustainable development[q] taken by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventh session, and called for its application, as appropriate, to small island developing States.

21. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Establishment of regional and national environmental assessment programmes to address the carrying capacity of natural resources, including the social, economic and cultural implications of tourism development;

(*b*) Strengthening of institutional capacity-building in the tourism sector, and promoting environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage through local community awareness and participation;

(*c*) Encouragement of the use of modern technologies and communications systems that effectively maximize the use of global, regional and national information in support of sustainable tourism development;

(*d*) Improvement of the collection and use of tourism data as a means to facilitate the development of sustainable tourism;

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[p] E/CN.17/1999/5 and Add.1-5

[q] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 9* (E/1999/29), chap. I.C.

(*e*) Establishment of partnerships for sustainable tourism to conserve and utilize limited resources effectively, based on consumer and market demand and the development of community-based initiatives. Destination marketing should preserve local culture and a healthy environment;

(*f*) Building of institutional capacity, further development of human resources at all levels of the tourism industry, with particular emphasis on small- and medium-sized enterprises and improvement of the capacity to utilize modern technologies.

22. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Enhancement of sustainable tourism and sustainably managed tourism operations through the adoption of appropriate regulations, a voluntary code of conduct, criteria for best practices and other innovative measures;

(*b*) Mobilization of adequate resources from all sources to assist small island developing States in strengthening institutional capacity, human resources and environmental protection;

(*c*) Improvement of the capacity of small island developing States to implement treaty requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization.

23. The linkages between sustainable tourism, energy and transport are of considerable importance to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the small island developing States amongst them. This should be borne in mind in preparation for the agenda item on energy and transport at the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

III. Means of implementation

A. Sustainable development strategies

24. National and regional sustainable development strategies allow for a more effective use of national and regional human, institutional, financial and natural resources, as well as cooperation at the regional and interregional levels. Comprehensive and collaborative strategies can also provide a solid basis for the more efficient and cost-effective implementation of donor-assisted programmes and projects. This is especially the case if these strategies are conceived as action-oriented, allowing for a process of step-by-step improvements and adjustments, and as an instrument to promote broader participation of all relevant groups and civil society.

25. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Renewed commitment by small island developing States to the completion of national sustainable development strategies and, as appropriate, of regional and subregional

strategies, ideally before the target date of 2002 as agreed at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, held in 1997, so as to enable the earliest possible implementation of those strategies;

(*b*) Exchange of experience among different island regions in the implementation of their national sustainable development strategies;

(*c*) Formulation of sustainable development strategies through transparent and participatory approaches and, to the extent possible, to set out clear indicators and benchmarks of progress which, while reflecting individual country circumstances, will also reflect wider goals, including regional objectives. Such indicators should also provide a framework for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of national implementation strategies and international cooperation in this regard;

(*d*) Strengthening of national/regional statistical and analytical services so that they can adequately record and measure progress, including changes in the vulnerability and fragility of their economic and environmental conditions. Data collection should be gender and age disaggregated;

(*e*) Consistency with the goals of the programmes and plans of action of the international sustainable development strategies, adopted at successive global conferences of the 1990s.

B. Capacity-building

26. Capacity-building remains critical to the long-term sustainable development of small island developing States. Small island developing States are determined to continue their efforts at capacity-building. Concern remains in respect of the levels of external assistance for capacity-building. Mobilization of resources from all sources is essential to enable small island developing States to continue their commitment to sustainable development at all levels, in particular to build capacity for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

27. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Continued development and implementation of sustainable development strategies to strengthen institutional capacity;

(*b*) Promotion of education for sustainable development, including training in demographic issues and gender balance in the delivery of all education and public-awareness programmes;

(*c*) Building, as appropriate, with international support to sectoral agencies, of the capacities of small island developing States for operationalizing sustainable development management concepts, including, where appropriate, the ecosystem approach;

(*d*) Making greater use of traditional and indigenous skills-training and awareness-raising approaches, use of local languages in the development and presentation of resource material and involvement of local communities in education, training and awareness programmes;

(*e*) Continued development and strengthening of public-private partnerships involving the full range of potential partners to promote and support sustainable development;

(*f*) Strengthening of regional technical training and scientific research centres; scientific research, including the improvement of data and data collection, and centres of excellence in tourism and sustainable development.

C. Resource mobilization and finance

28. Resource mobilization is clearly one of the main challenges for small island developing States, and while their concern with resource constraints is by no means new, small island developing States believe it must be addressed with a new resolve by all partners if the special session is to provide the needed impetus to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Adequate financial resources at all levels remain crucial to the continued implementation of the Programme of Action. Availability of and access to appropriate and current technology, and improved baseline information and environmental data to address technical issues are also crucial. The successful implementation of the Programme of Action will thus require the provision of effective means, including adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, in accordance with chapter 33 of Agenda 21, paragraphs 91 to 95 of the Programme of Action and paragraphs 76 to 87 of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21.[r] The mobilization of resources will also be necessary for the transfer of environmentally sound technology, as set forth in the Programme of Action, and for science and technology and capacity-building, including education, awareness-raising and institutional development.

29. Many small island developing States find it increasingly difficult to access concessional development finance owing to the application of criteria by some members of the international community, which focus on their relatively higher per capita gross national product levels without taking full account of their actual levels of development, vulnerability or standard of living in real terms. Financial requirements and technical support remain as critical as ever if the implementation of the Programme of Action is to progress further, and will depend ultimately on the resources that small island developing States can mobilize from internal and external sources to meet the great challenges of sustainable development in general and capacity-building in particular. Recognizing that small island developing States are among the most environmentally vulnerable, the Commission urged the international community to give special priority to their situations and needs, including through access to grants and other concessional resources.

30. Statistics provided through the Commission indicate that the overall decline in official development assistance has also affected small island developing States, for which net bilateral and multilateral disbursements have decreased from US$ 2,366.2 million in 1994 to $1,966.2 million in 1997. This decline in official development assistance to small island developing States has had an impact on these States.

31. It is recognized that financial resources for sustainable development need to be further mobilized at the national level, in accordance with national priorities and capacity. Small island developing States must also intensify their search for new modalities for resource mobilization, particularly for regional initiatives. Donors and small island developing States should make more efficient use of existing resources, including through better coordination. Action should be initiated to optimize the role of existing regional coordinating mechanisms.

[r] Resolution S/19-2, annex.

Possibilities for encouraging private sector cooperation with partners in small island developing States should be an area for further attention in the follow-up of the Programme of Action. Resources could also be mobilized through the adoption of a regional approach to issues of policy, legislation and technical development.

32. The responsiveness of international funding sources, such as the Global Environment Facility to issues concerning small island developing States has been welcomed, particularly in relation to the implementation of small island developing States commitments under the relevant conventions, and the Facility will remain an important channel for financial resources to assist those States. Overall, access by small island developing States to multilateral financial institutions, and the responsiveness of those institutions should be improved.

33. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Identification of programmes and projects, with particular reference to the areas identified for urgent action which could be financed by the Global Environment Facility and other multilateral financial mechanisms;

(*b*) Improvement of the effectiveness of bilateral and multilateral development assistance, including by streamlining and harmonizing procedures, indicators and reporting methods, and by promoting coordination among donors;

(*c*) Building on the recent meeting of representatives of donors and small island developing States, with special consideration from the international community for new and additional financial commitments and disbursements of resources, as well as better and more efficient use of official development assistance and other existing external sources of finance, taking into account the specific development needs and priorities of small island developing States;

(*d*) Evacuation of project proposals submitted by small island developing States by competent authorities, taking into account the specific development needs and priorities of those States and paying particular attention to the areas of the Programme of Action which have not yet received adequate resources;

(*e*) Inviting international financial institutions to continue their commitment to sustainable development projects and programmes in small island developing States.

D. Globalization and trade liberalization

34. Small island developing States face new challenges and opportunities from globalization, and have diverse capacities to adapt. Thus, the potential benefits to small island developing States from globalization and trade liberalization will be severely constrained unless their limitations and vulnerabilities are further recognized by the international community, including the relevant international organizations. There is therefore an urgent need to facilitate the integration of the economies of those States into the world economy in a sustainable manner, including through specific provisions and measures. This should be given due consideration in the ongoing work being done by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and by the World Trade Organization, taking into account, among other considerations, within the context of trade

liberalization, the effects on the economies of small island developing States of the erosion of trade preferences, as well as difficulties faced with diversification and access markets.

35. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Addressing, as appropriate, the disadvantages and the vulnerabilities of small island developing States in the context of international trade, including market access, taking into account the consequences, positive and negative, of globalization and trade liberalization on small island developing States, and the need to facilitate the integration of small island developing States into the global market;

(*b*) Addressing the adverse consequences and benefits, existing and potential, of globalization and trade liberalization for the economies of small island developing States, and assisting small island developing States, as appropriate, in improving their competitiveness, including through provisions and specific measures. In this regard the multilateral trading system is encouraged to consider, as appropriate, the grant of special and differential treatment;

(*c*) Calling on United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in consultation with small island developing States, to address the economic situation and trading prospects of those States in its ongoing comprehensive examination of the impact of globalization and trade liberalization on their economies during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly;

(*d*) Calling on the international community to provide support to small island developing States, as necessary, towards the improvement and strengthening of their capabilities in trade policy, trade efficiency policies, trade in services, including in electronic commerce, to assist them in coping with the challenge posed by the globalization of markets;

(*e*) Calling on the international community to provide support and technical assistance, as necessary, to small island developing States, including in capacity-building, to enhance their effective participation in multilateral trade negotiations, activities and dispute settlement (including the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization), and formulating a positive agenda for future trade negotiations;

(*f*) Addressing, as appropriate, the difficulties of diversification in the economies of small island developing States.

E. Transfer of environmentally sound technology

36. Small island developing States have special characteristics and concerns in such areas as the environment. The development and application of new approaches and technologies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the effects of climate change are critical to them. To enhance their effectiveness, these technologies should be modified, if necessary, to take into account the special needs of small island developing States, and emphasis should be placed on technologies that are low in cost and proven in terms of environmental benefit and security, such as renewable energy and conservation technologies. Small island developing States have devoted considerable time, effort and resources to work on technologies and technology information. Continued financial and technical support from all sources is needed.

37. Small island developing States are at different stages in assessing nationally their vulnerabilities and ways of adapting to climate change. They recognize that further study, research and analysis are required to assess the effects of climate change. One particular urgency is to identify appropriate technology to meet the needs of low-lying small island developing States whose national freshwater supplies are already contaminated by saline intrusion. International efforts in studying the problems, conducting research and developing adaptation technologies could usefully complement and strengthen the work begun by small island developing States.

38. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Development of and participation of small island developing States in clean technology initiatives, including the identification of investment opportunities in environmentally sound technologies and environmental management practices;

(*b*) Promotion of access by small island developing States to information on the availability of environmentally sound technologies and terms of their transfer, in particular in areas identified for priority action;

(*c*) Building of capacities of small island developing States for science and technology needs assessment and technology assessment;

(*d*) Provision of support to small island developing States in the development of networking technology-related institutional support structures, including information systems and sources, technology centres, enterprise development centres and research and development institutions;

(*e*) Provision of multilateral and bilateral support to small island developing States and their institutions involved in technologies and technology information;

(*f*) Encouragement of private sector participation, *inter alia*, through the use of partnership arrangements, including public-private partnerships, in developing cooperation between small island developing States and other countries in order to facilitate the transfer and use of environmentally sound technology and environmentally sound technology-related investments to those States as set forth in the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

(*g*) Encouragement of strategic alliances between research and development institutions and potential technology users to harness the creative capabilities of the scientific communities in the development of new, proven and innovative adaptation strategies and relevant technologies suitable to the particular circumstances of small island developing States, for example, in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.[8]

F. Vulnerability index

39. At its sixth session, the Commission on Sustainable Development recalled that a vulnerability index that takes account of the constraints arising from small size and environmental fragility, as well as the incidence of natural disasters on a national scale, and

[8] A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

the consequent relationship of those constraints to economic vulnerability, would assist in defining the vulnerability of small island developing States and in identifying the challenges to their sustainable development. It has also been recognized that a vulnerability index of environmental as well as socio-economic parameters, which takes fully into account the special circumstances and vulnerabilities of small island developing States, could be useful. The widespread use of a vulnerability index as a potential supplement to other criteria used in decision-making on cooperation with small island developing States, including concessional treatment, is strongly encouraged.

40. The need for a vulnerability index on socio-economic and environmental parameters is highlighted in the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Small island developing States have set a high priority on the development of the vulnerability index, and support the process of defining the concept of vulnerability as it applies to small island developing States and the identification of common elements of vulnerability, which render them susceptible to economic and ecological exogenous shocks. The coordination of efforts by the United Nations and other international organizations to develop an index is essential.

41. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action:

(*a*) Completion of the quantitative and analytic work on a vulnerability index for small island developing States, preferably by the year 2000;

(*b*) Building of capacity at all levels for the long-term monitoring and evaluation of vulnerability;

(*c*) Welcoming of the inclusion of small island developing States in the *Global Environment Outlook* process, which will provide better environmental baseline data.

G. Information management: Small Island Developing States Network

42. The Small Island Developing States Network is a tangible outcome of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Along with other information technology programmes, it holds significant potential for the effective and successful implementation of the Programme of Action. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, small island developing States, through their Alliance of Small Island States, have been closely involved in the development of the Network. To strengthen the Network concept, it is important that small island developing States enhance their ownership of it.

43. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action:

(*a*) Facilitation of the transfer, as set forth in the Programme of Action, of modern technology and communication systems in order to promote their use;

(*b*) Addressing the constraints to Internet connectivity;

(*c*) Improvement of the information packaging in relation to sustainable development;

(*d*) Encouragement of private sector opportunities and involvement;

(*e*) Provision of necessary human resources support and training;

(*f*) Establishment of links to existing clearing house and similar network mechanisms and other relevant conventions;

(*g*) Invitation of appropriate international cooperation for the aforementioned purposes;

(*h*) Strengthening of the Network as an important source of information on best practices in environmental management.

H. International cooperation and partnership

44. The effective implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will require the United Nations system to make more effective use of existing resources, seek possibilities for mobilizing new resources and improve coordination mechanisms for the focused and harmonized delivery of support for priorities relevant to small island developing States. In this respect, ongoing efforts undertaken by the United Nations system to enhance coordination could be useful. The existing institutional arrangements within the United Nations system would also require strengthening in order to implement the Programme of Action fully. The United Nations should continue to play its catalytic and supportive role, particularly through the regional commissions, which play an integral role in the overall implementation of the Programme of Action, especially in the provision of assistance for capacity-building in small island developing States. Consequently, the efforts to reform the institutional arrangements within the United Nations system must take these concerns into account for future actions.

45. Ongoing monitoring and review is an important aspect of measuring performance, and will need to continue by way of reports of the Secretary-General and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and its agreed programme of work.[1] United Nations agencies would need to focus further on their areas of expertise and agreed mandates, as well as build upon regional or national strategies, conventions and programmes that are country-driven. Moreover, there are important linkages with the Commission's review of oceans and seas, and recommendations on international coordination and cooperation.

46. In addition to improving coordination, agencies of the United Nations system should be more proactive in seeking the views of small island developing States across the full range of sustainable development issues in order to ensure that they take due account of both national differences and local sensitivities, in particular, sensitivities in relation to such areas as traditional knowledge and the special place of local and indigenous communities.

47. Increased international support for regional monitoring and assessment will be required and the participation of small island developing States in the *Global Environment Outlook* will be welcomed. It will be essential to develop benchmarks and improve performance indicators, including time-frames for measuring and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action and decisions by governing bodies of United Nations agencies. Although periodic reviews of certain aspects of the Programme of Action are envisaged within the context of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, a full and comprehensive review of these decisions and the implementation of the Programme of Action would be useful and required in 2004.

[1] See E/CN.17/1996/6.

48. In the context of actions being undertaken to address these issues and on the basis of a strong and committed partnership between small island developing States and the international community, the international community and small island developing States should pursue and support the following goals, objectives and activities, including through specific modalities, to assist in the continued implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

(*a*) Strengthening of the existing institutional arrangements through more efficient use of resources in the United Nations to maximize support for small island developing States and so that the United Nations, its agencies and regional commissions may become more effective in promoting and assisting sustainable development in island States;

(*b*) Facilitating of the development of partnerships among all stakeholders, in particular local communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector;

(*c*) Recognizing the role and function of the Alliance of Small Island States and encouraging and supporting the efforts of the Alliance in promoting the interests and concerns of those States and their sustainable development;

(*d*) Ensuring that United Nations agencies and Member States take into consideration national and regional sustainable development strategies and mechanisms, such as regional conventions, treaties and other regional agreements and/or arrangements adopted by small island developing States, as the umbrella for programme design, in close consultation with the small island developing States of the regions concerned, thereby ensuring that the activities of the United Nations agencies are increasingly aligned with the strategies, work plans and coordination mechanisms of the regional organizations of small island developing States;

(*e*) Support by United Nations agencies of the efforts of small island developing States to accede and implement relevant international conventions. In the event that some small island developing States are unable, on account of financial or human resource constraints, to accede to international conventions, their partners in sustainable development should consult with them to seek their views on the issues addressed by such conventions in order that they may be able to take account of their positions during meetings of the conferences of parties to those conventions;

(*f*) Support to other regional and subregional organizations belonging to or operating in regions of small island developing States in continuing and strengthening their efforts to implement the Programme of Action, and support to the national implementation effort of the Governments of small island developing States.

23. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Letter dated 24 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The General Assembly, at its twenty-second special session, decides to take note of the letter dated 24 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and of the annex thereto,[1] and decides to transmit the letter and its annex to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session for further consideration by the Second Committee under the agenda item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

[1] A/S-22/6.

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